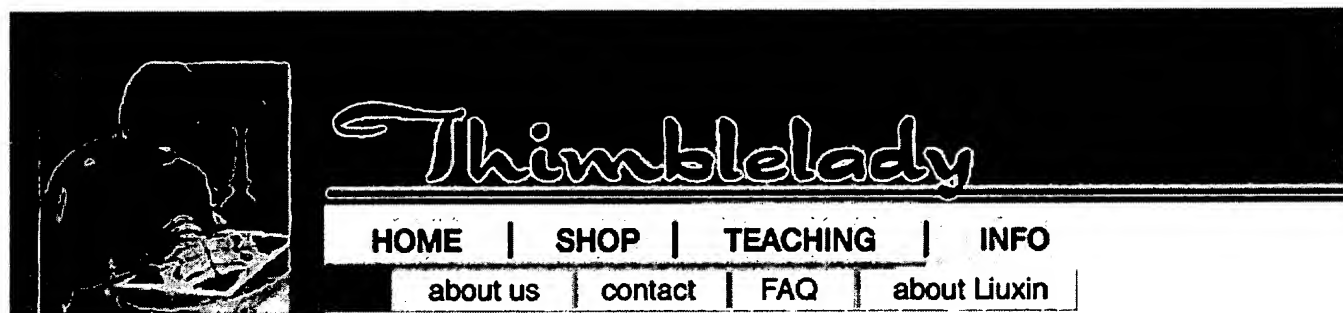


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Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the difference between the two shape of thimbles?

Open Cut Thimble:

It is our old design. It is made to fit not just to the sizes but also to the shape of your fingers. The merit of this **thimble** is it can be used not just for the Thimblelady's Folding Technique but also for other sewing. Some applique teachers are recommending it for hand applique. The limits of the open cut thimbles are 1) time consuming in hand making them, we can't make the quality at the speed the market demands; 2) requires personal service to fit thimbles.

Cone Shape Thimble:

Our new design! Patent pending. I can't wait to tell you how exciting this **thimble** is! The design focus of this **thimble** is to overcome the limits of the open cut **thimble**! It is easier to make so we can keep the price down but the quality up. It is easy sizing (e.g. buy by mail order) as it is more forgiving of finger shapes (most difference between fingers are at the tips! You can always have the perfect dimple to hold needles no matter how much your finger swells/shrinks in a day.

Better still, the even bigger and deeper dimples give you the best ever conical needles. The cone shape body covers the top **knuckle** of your finger so to prevent your quilting hand cramping even when I am not looking over your shoulder.

Which finger is the best for hand quilting?

Any finger can be used for hand quilting using this technique. However, most quilters I taught naturally prefer the index finger (before they learn to quilt with their thumbs). So do I. The reason I choose to use the middle finger instead of the index is because I find, in real quilting process, "pulling a heavily loaded row" is a far greater job that is better for the stronger index finger. The less strong middle finger, with the help of the strong **thimble**, can be more productive in quilting. You wouldn't find your middle finger not strong enough. In fact, the hardest thing to learn is to come to terms quickly in your mind just how little strength you need to use when quilting with this method and **thimble**. I use the middle finger and a thumb which is even stronger than the index finger to pull and use the index finger and thumb (yes, with thumb **thimble** on) to pull next after 12 stitches are loaded.

What is a correct fit for the Cone **thimble**?

The correct fit is first it is too small so it can't cover your top **knuckle** at all after wearing it for a while. As long as the large end of the **thimble** can cover the **knuckle** a bit to make it very uncomfortable to bend, it is a good fit. On the other hand, a **thimble** is not too big, it slides right down to near your second **knuckle** and make the natural bending of the second **knuckle** difficult.

Don't over worry about "covering the **knuckle** entirely" or your finger changing shape (swells). That is natural. Everyone's finger changes in winter and summer, in the morning or afternoon of a day. When that happens you just change to the **thimble** that suits you the best. That is the aim of the design.

Can I use a cone shape **thimble** on the finger and an open cut one on the thumb at the same time?

Sure. The **thimbles** are not used at the same time - you quilt with one finger and thumb at a time. The difference is in the quilting directions - quilt away from your body with your thumb or towards your body with your finger. In terms of quilting technique, they are both the same.

The difference is just that you can still cramp the finger up like a quilter's hand (as we did before with the old design **thimble** even if the teacher asked you not to have done that a lot!). The cone **thimble** stops you cramping! So if you have already developed a bad habit of cramping fingers and feel you can't undo it quickly, get the cone **thimble**! You can't quilt unless you follow the **thimble** method and give up on cramping. Using the old design on the thumb is not a problem because not many people even quilt with a thumb before and hardly anybody already has a bad habit of cramping his/her thumb. That is why some quilters choose to learn this method with their thumb (no bad habit to break). It is the cramping a very bad and common problem for hand quilters due to the old design of **thimbles**.

What differentiates your **thimbles** from all the others on the market?

The small but revolutionary difference I have made is in the dimples. I made bigger and deeper dimples so we can **HOLD** needles not just push needles over our thimbles. That gives you a much better control over needles when quilting. Changing the dimples on my thimbles, I find how well one can quilt is determined by how well one can control her/his needle. Once you learn my **FOLDING** technique using my thimbles, you will find: you don't have to prick your underneath finger to feel the needle coming through; Or the smaller the size needle, the smaller the stitches you get... Try it! Gramma's old rules were learned by her old thimbles!

Our hand making process gives your finger an individual fit as we make them in different sizes but in different shapes.

Why are the thimbles made of sterling silver and 9ct gold?

As we all know, quilting **thimble** bears enormous pressure through hand quilting. A strong **thimble** is surely a necessity. Sterling silver and 9ct gold are strong while not too heavy. The principle is simple: One needs to use the right weight hammer for the nail to save energy.

Another important factor is that silver and gold are known to be the two metals that are most human skin friendly. Other metals are likely to cause some finger skin irritation or allergy. To quilt as long as we enjoy and as well as we will, a comfortable **thimble** is a necessity.

Why are the thimbles and **thimble** holders hand made and hand polished?

In short, silver/gold-smithing is a process of annealing (softening) and hand (hardening) through which a silver or gold work reaches its final shape in its strongest form. The hand making process ensures your **thimble** is stronger than cast ones of the same weight. The hand polishing process gives a well hardened sterling silver/gold **thimble** that has a fine lustre unique to the precious metals. No plated or cast items can compete with.

After handling thousands of fingers, I found our fingers not only differ in size but also differ in shapes. Hand made thimbles enable you to have a **thimble** that is made for you.

Can your thimbles be penetrated?

Yes, technically. All thimbles will eventually be worn through, just like shoes. The only **thimble** that won't be worn through is the **thimble** you don't like to use. Those thimbles don't fit any fingers and sit on the shelf to collect dust will sit there forever. However, I have used my sterling silver thimbles for 6 years now. I have worn through one dimple. But I have made 5 beautiful quilts with it and all of them won prizes.

If you even the cost of **thimble** on the quilts made with it, you can easily see that the **thimble** is the cheapest in every cent you spend on the quilts. You pay for threads, needles and fabrics on a quilt. Most important of all, you save on hands and enjoyed the ultimate pleasure of making the most beautiful quilt with perfect hand quilting stitches you ever had!

What should I do to take care of the **thimble**?

"To keep the family silver shiny is to use it daily." So said my silversmith in-law. Use your **thimble** as much as you can. To clean the tarnish or grime wash it in hot soapy water and dry it while it is hot or wipe it with silver polish cloth from a general supermarket. To take the scratches out before the silver matures, polish it gently with Thimblelady's special polishing cloth (\$1 each) more than once a month.

It simply shines when the silver is matured. My three year old silver **thimble** no longer needs any polishing. My gold **thimble** won't even scratch as it is harder than my needle. Instructions on care of the **thimble** is attached to every **thimble**. You will get one when you purchase a **thimble**.

Do left handed quilters need a different kind of **thimble**?

No, you need a **thimble** that just fits the finger you want to quilt with, whether you are left or right handed. The reason for that is you will no longer quilt with the tip of your finger or **thimble** which causes all sorts of pain on your hand. I quilt with both 2 fingers and a thumb on my left hand and 3 fingers and a thumb on my right hand using the **thimble**. So can you! Hand quilting has never been so easy.

Shopping and Ordering Questions

How to find the prices of your products?

Prices are displayed next to each product in the "Shop" and on the printable form.

What do you charge for delivery?

The new Paypal system ensures item you pay exactly what the price is. No about hidden bank charges for currency conversion.

I live in the USA. Can I buy your thimbles in the USA?

You can purchase all Thimblelady's thimbles through our online shopping. The sterling silver thimbles are also retailed by our US and overseas retailers which are listed on the [US and Overseas Shop](#) page.

You can buy the thimbles online directly from Thimblelady, or buy from our retailers any items that require personal fitting. Potential retailers are welcome to contact Thimblelady.

How can I find out my **thimble** size?

Our "Sizing Your Finger" page has information about determining your correct size. Simply follow the instruction on sizing, and you will find out your size.

case, you ordered the wrong size of a silver **thimble**, you can send it back exchange.

What else do I get with a **thimble** in mail order?

You will get with each **thimble** a leaflet of finger positions and Thimblelady contacts. The postage you pay will cover a full insurance of A\$100 should parcel be lost in the mail and a jewelry box to hold the **thimble**.

How long will it take for you to deliver my order?

We pride ourselves on immediate delivery which means you should receive ordered goods round about 10- 15 working days from the day your order is shipped (anywhere in the world). You should contact us if you don't receive ordered goods in three weeks' time. However, we will inform you in case you experience unusual circumstances beyond our control such as Christmas sales.

Could I exchange the **thimble** with you in case it doesn't fit?

Yes, you can exchange with me any time. But you must not use the **thimble** will need to pay the shipping to send it back to us. And we shall pay for the shipping back to you. We do not refund a silver **thimble**. We do not exchange a **thimble** that has been used.

Do you have a Return policy?

All our products are individually inspected before delivery. However, a full refund including postage will be provided should our products have any manufacturing faults.

Will my personal details be private?

Thimblelady will not, under any circumstances, collect or retain any personal information of our customers. We will not send you any advertising or promotional information without your request. With the new paypal system, we will not access your payment details. All we will receive are the products you order your mailing address and a notification from paypal to inform us that your payment has been made.

Any more questions? [Email Thimblelady](mailto:EmailThimblelady)

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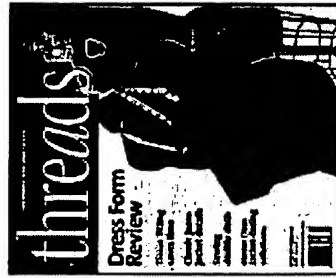
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ARTICLES

From the pages of *Threads Magazine*

At Last, the Perfect Thimble Here's a comfortable, custom leather thimble you'll enjoy making and wearing

by *Samantha Brennehan*

I've been sewing since I was a child, but I've never been able to get used to the feel of a traditional metal thimble on my finger. For years, I avoided using one and resigned myself to the discomfort of needle jabs.

Recently, I made a baby's jacket completely quilted by hand. Pushing a small, fine needle through the jacket's fabric and cotton batting to make all of those tiny stitches finally convinced me how

important such a small tool could be. I struggled through my project using a standard metal thimble, but I still didn't become accustomed to it. So I began searching for a thimble that would not only fit better but also be comfortable to wear during long periods of continuous hand stitching.

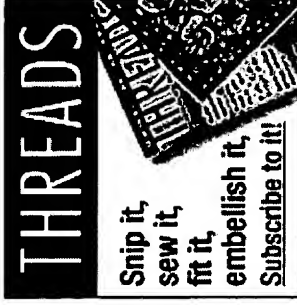
I tried various kinds of leather thimbles like those often used by quilters (most are made of leather and fabric with a tiny metal plate in the tip). None of them was quite right: One came unglued; another stretched in use and kept falling off; one was made of shiny leather too slippery to hold the needle; and still another was made of leather so thick it didn't need a



Eliminate the discomfort of needle jabs when hand sewing with a custom thimble that really fits.

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metal plate, but I couldn't feel what I was doing when stitching with it. I even tried using the fingertips of old gloves with a little felt tucked inside to snug the fit. These makeshift thimbles fit better than most, but they wore out much too quickly.

A fitting solution

In a spurt of inspiration and/or frustration, I decided to design my own perfect leather thimble that combined all of the features that I liked: soft, spongy leather for easy needle-grabbing; a long "tail" over the knuckle to adjust the position and to easily pull it on and off; and a hard tip, slanted like a fingertip, to push the needle through the fabric while protecting the finger.

If you have the same thimble dilemma that I did or if you just want a colorful set of really useful thimbles, try this design yourself.

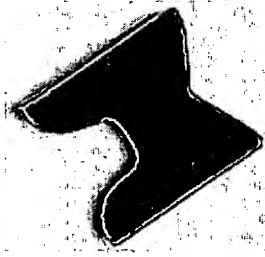
Because it's so quick to make, you can produce several thimbles in a matter of minutes. And that's not a bad idea because you can keep one everywhere you sew. Plus you'll always have a spare if one is lost or wears out.

Start with the basic tube-and-tail pattern. It's a good fit for my fairly small finger, but you can easily enlarge or reduce it by cutting it wider or narrower at the seamline (see [Make a custom-fitted thimble](#)). The wide V-shaped angle at the tip provides for the thimble's slanted end. This slanted design ensures that the needle hits the hard tip every time and doesn't slide off.

Thimble construction

Most of my thimbles are made from soft pigskin scraps that I've collected (a 3-in. square is usually large enough). I've also used chamois or old gloves -- a perfect use for the glove that's

[The pattern for the thimble](#)



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lost its mate but which you can't bear to throw away. Soft leather is very flexible and comfortable, but it has a tendency to stretch out, so I make my thimbles a little tight at first. To further compensate for this stretching, I put a little "belt" on each thimble just behind the first knuckle. The belt can be made from a little strip of leather or a bit of cord elastic and should fit fairly snug because it keeps the thimble on your finger at a comfortable angle, even if the leather stretches.

The tip itself is a sandwich of two layers of leather with a smaller circle of hard plastic between them. A dime is the perfect template for cutting these leather circles. I cut the plastic circle from packaging or from milk jugs, again tracing the dime, then cutting away 1/8 in. inside the marking. Test the plastic to be sure the eye end of a needle won't poke through.

The easiest way to construct this thimble is to use both glue (Sobo or another white fabric glue) and stitching. A thin line of glue applied along the seam edges acts as basting, but stitching is necessary to secure the pieces together. I stitch the long tube seam by machine (a regular needle works fine), but I find it easier to sew the tip to the tube by hand, using a leather needle and a double strand of waxed thread.

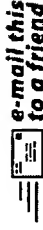
After sewing the thimble, line the tail section with a scrap of soft cotton or leather by gluing it in place. This stabilizes the tail, which is pulled when you slip the thimble on and off your finger.

Finally, I have a thimble that really protects my finger and is so comfortable I often forget I have it on. In fact, more than once I've left my studio still wearing it.

Samantha Brenneman makes thimbles and sews in Berwyn, Ill.

Photos: Sloan Howard; drawings: Christine Erikson

From *Threads* #87, pp. 54-55
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AT LAST, THE PERFECT THIMBLE

by Samantha Brenneman

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